

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 044134

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT MAPUTO 0198 ACTION SECSTATE INFO USUN NEW YORK,
LUSAKA, PRETORIA AND CAPE TOWN FEB 17.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 0198

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, RH, US, MZ

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: MACHEL'S DESIRE FOR CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA
AND SITHOLE

REF: (A) STATE 039527, (B) MAPUTO 0192, (C) MAPUTO 0171

1. UK AMBASSADOR LEWEN AND I MET LAST NIGHT WITH SERGIO VIEIRA.
VIEIRA SEEMED TO BE FULLY BRIEFED ON THE MEETING LEWEN AND I
HAD WITH MACHEL ON FEBRUARY 11.

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2. LEWEN AND I ASKED VIEIRA IF ANNOUNCEMENTS COMING OUT OF
SALISBURY ABOUT AGREEMENT BEING REACHED BETWEEN SMITH AND MUZOREWA
AND SITHOLE HAD CHANGED MACHEL'
ATTITUDES TOWARDS MUZOREWA OR SITHOLE OR HIS INTEREST IN CONTACTING
THEM. WE SAID THAT OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS WERE TRYING TO FIND OUT
EXACTLY WHAT HAD BEEN AGREED UPON IN ORDER TO DECIDE HOW
BEST TO PROCEED. WE SAID THAT AS FAR AS WE KNOW

OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS WERE STILL INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, BUT NOTED THAT OUR MEETINGS WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WERE QUITE SEPARATE FROM INITIATIVE ON WHICH MACHEL HAD ASKED FOR OUR HELP.

3. VIEIRA HESITATED TO SPEAK FOR MACHEL. HE SAID HE WOULD BE SEEING THE PRESIDENT IN THE MORNING AND HE WOULD LET US KNOW WHETHER THE PRESIDENT STILL WANTED TO CONTACT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. VIEIRA TELEPHONE A SHORT WHILE AGO TO SAY THAT INDEED THE PRESIDENT IS STILL VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN GETTING IN TOUCH WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE AND HOPED WE WOULD ASSIST HIM IN THIS EFFORT. VIEIRA STRESSED THAT IT IMPORTANT THAT CONTACT BE ESTABLISHED QUICKLY AND HE URGED US TO SEND AN INTERMEDIARY TO MAPUTO SOONEST I PROMISED TO REPORT MACHEL'S WISHES IMMEDIATELY TO WASHINGTON, BUT REMINDED HIM THAT WHILE US WOULD LIKE TO BE RESPONSIVE TO MACHEL'S REQUEST, NO DECISION HAD AS YET BEEN REACHED ON WHETHER WE WOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO.

4. BASED ON WHAT MACHEL TOLD US ON SATURDAY (REFTEL C) AND FROM VIEIRA'S COMMENTS LAST NIGHT, LWEEN AND I THINK MACHEL WANTS TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS.
THAT ANY INTERNAL AGREEMENT SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA MAKE WITH SMITH IS NOT GOING TO END THE FIGHTING ON CONTRARY IT WILL ONLY CONFIDENTIAL

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PROLONG THE FIGHTING
-THAT IN FACT THE FIGHTING IS LIKELY TO BECOME NASTIER AND LEAD TO TRIBAL AND RACIAL WAR:
-THAT IF MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE MAKE A DEAL WITH SMITH THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ABOVE CONSEQUENCES WILL REST CLEARLY ON THEIR SHOULDERS:
-THAT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE WILL REPUDIATE THEM AND THAT THEY WILL BE VIEWED AS TRAITORS BY OTHER AFRICANS AND THE WORLD.
-THAT IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO TURN BACK FROM THIS DISASTER COURSE THAT IF THEY WITHDRAW FROM TALKS WITH SMITH THEY WOULD BE WELCOME TO RETURN TO PARTICIPATE IN ONGOING DISCUSSION TO FIND AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION AND END TO FIGHTING.
-THAT MACHEL (AND PERHAPS OTHER FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS) WILL ENSURE THEM A ROLE IN A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, AND THAT THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THEM TO CONTEST IN FREE AND IMPARTIAL ELECTIONS THE RESULT OF WHICH WILL BE ACCEPTED BY MACHEL.

5. OBVIOUSLY, MACHEL'S SUGGESTION THAT THE UK/US CONSIDER MODIFICATION OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE TRANSITION GOVERNING COUNCIL

TO GIVE MORE WEIGHT TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, IF IT BECOMES KNOWN TO MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, WILL NOT MAKE THEM RECEPTIVE TO OUERTURES TO RETURN TO THE AAP TALKS. MACHEL IS AWARE OF THIS TOO. BOTH LEWEN AND I THINK THAT MACHEL WILL BACK OFF FROM PRESSING FOR MODIFICATION AND AGREE TO THE UK/US PROPOSAL ON MEMBERSHIP IF MUZOREWA AND OR SITHOLE GIVE ANY INDICATION THAT THEY WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT TALKS. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE DO NOT AGREE TO RETUTRN TO THE FOLD, THEN WE CAN BE ALMOST CERTAIN THAT MACHEL WILL ARGUE THAT THEY NO LONGER DESERVE EQUAL REPRESENTATION WITH ZAPU AND ZANU IN THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, AND WE MAY ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS IN GAINING MACHEL'S AND PF'S ACCEPTANCE OF OUR PROPOSAL ON MEMBERSHIP. CONFIDENTIAL

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6 MACHEL'S PURPOSE IN APPROACHING THE UK AND US FOR AN INTERMEDIARY MAY BE MIXED. CERTAINLY MACHEL WOULD LIKE TO SEE US USE OUR INFLUENCE TO PREVENT AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. HE MAY CALCULATE THAT IF WE AGREE TO PROVIDE AN INTERMEDIARY, HE WILL BE NUDGING US IN THIS DIRECTION. AT THE SAME TIME. LEWEN AND I DO NOT SHARE WASHINGTON'S JUDGEMENT THAT IT IS EASY FOR MACHEL TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. HE PROFESSES NOT TO BE IN TOUCH WITH THEM. WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THIS. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANY MOZAMBICAN IN WHOM MACHEL HAS CONFIDENCE TO EGT INTO RHODESIA TO SEE EITHER MUZOREWA ORSITHOLE. MACHEL PROBABLY ALSO HAS STRONG REASONS WHY HE DOES NOT WISH TO USE A ZIMBABWEAN IT THIS STAGE, HE MAY NOT WANT ZANU OR ZAPU TO KNOW THAT HE IS IN TOUCH WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. HE MAY WELL CONCLUDE THAT THE USE OF A WESTERN INTERMEDIARY WOULD BE THE SECUREST AND QUICKEST WAY TO ESTABLISH CONTACT.

7. ALTHOUGH THERE ADMITTLEDLY ARE RISKS INVOLVED, I BELIEVE ON BALANCE THAT IT IS IN US INTEREST TO ACCEDE TO MACHEL'S REQUEST. MACHEL'S APPROACH TO US IS EVIDENCE THAT HE SEES HIMSELF AS COOPERATING WITH US TO REACH A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA. WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE HIM IN THIS VIEW. MOREOVER OF THE FRONT PRESIDENTS, MACHEL IS PROBABLY IN THE BEST POSITION TO BE HELPFUL TO US WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, SHOULD HE WANT TO DO SO. HE MAY WELL BE THE KEY IF WE ARE TO STAND ANY CHANCE OF BREAKING DOWN PF INTRANSIGENCE. IT IS ALSO LIKELY TO BE MACHEL RATHER THAN HIS FRONT LINE COLLEAGUES. WHO WOULD TURN TO THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS FOR MILITARY HELP IF HE IS UNHAPPY WITH DEVELOPMENTS OF UK/US RESPONSE THERETO. FINALLY AS WE LOOK DOWN THE ROAD THE PROSPECTS FOR A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA AND AN END TO THE FIGHTING ARE BLEAK IF THE NATIONALIST LEADERS VIEW EACH OTHER AS IRRECONCILABLE CONFIDENTIAL

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RIVALS. FORTUNATELY MACHEL IS NOT READY TO ADMIT THAT WE HAVE
ALREADY REACHED THIS POINT. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE MACHEL
IN HIS EFFORTS TO
BRING ABOUT A REAPPROACHMENT. FOR THE ABOVE REASONS I RECOMMEND THAT
WE RESPOND POSITIVELY AND QUICKLY TO MACHEL'S REQUEST
FOR HELP IN FINDING AN INTERMEDIARY TO DELIVER HIS MESSAGE
TO MUZOREWS AND SITHOLE. DE PREE
UNQUOTE VANCE

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